

Overweight and Obesity among Adults in Virginia

The determination of being overweight or obese is based on a calculated height to weight ratio known as Body Mass Index (BMI). According to the American Heart Association (AHA), BMI is measured as weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared (kg/m^2).

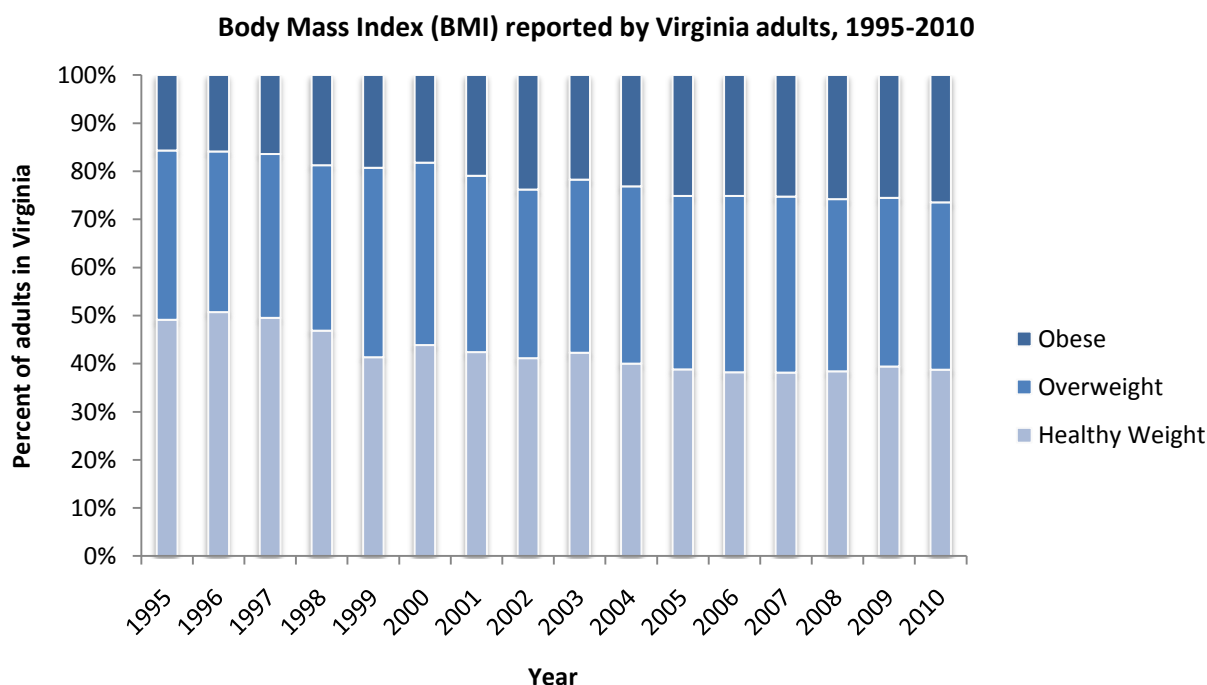
In studies by the National Center for Health Statistics, BMI categories are as follows:

- <18.5: underweight.
- 18.5-24.9: healthy.
- 25.0-29.9: overweight. Increased risk for cardiovascular disease and diabetes.
- 30.0 or greater: obese, or about 30 pounds or more overweight. Increased risk for cardiovascular disease and diabetes.
- 40.0 or greater: extreme obesity.

A BMI calculator, where an individual can enter height and weight, can be found on the CDC's website: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/>

The AHA notes that some well-trained people with dense muscle mass may have a high BMI score but very little body fat. For them a waist circumference, skin fold or fat fold measurement, or a more direct method of measuring body fat may be more useful.

- In Virginia, the percent of adults at a healthy weight has steadily declined from 49.1 percent in 1995 to 38.7 percent in 2010.
- The percent of adults who are obese has steadily increased from 15.7 percent in 1995 to 26.4 percent in 2010.



Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1995-2010.

Data notes: Percents are weighted based on demographic and household characteristics.

Percent of Virginia adults by BMI, 1995-2010

Year:	Obese	Overweight	Healthy weight
1995	15.7	35.2	49.1
1996	15.9	33.4	50.7
1997	16.4	34.1	49.5
1998	18.7	34.4	46.9
1999	19.3	39.4	41.4
2000	18.2	38.0	43.9
2001	20.9	36.7	42.4
2002	23.8	35.1	41.2
2003	21.7	36.0	42.3
2004	23.1	36.9	40.0
2005	25.1	36.1	38.8
2006	25.1	36.7	38.2
2007	25.3	36.6	38.2
2008	25.8	35.8	38.4
2009	25.5	35.1	39.4
2010	26.4	34.8	38.7

Since 1995, the percent of Virginians at a healthy weight has decreased by more than 10 percentage points, and the percent of Virginians who are obese has increased by more than 10 percentage points.

Source: Virginia Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 1995-2010.
Data Note: Percents are weighted based on 2000 U.S. Census data.

Healthy People 2020 Objectives:

NWS-8 Increase the proportion of adults who are at a healthy weight to 33.9%.

NWS-9 Reduce the proportion of adults who are obese to 30.6%.

Sources: American Heart Association: [Obesity Information](#); www.heart.org;
CDC – [BMI calculator](#); www.cdc.gov/healthyweight; Virginia BRFSS, 1995-2010